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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 TEL AVIV 001945

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PARM](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#) [IR](#) [LE](#) [IS](#) [KNNC](#) [UN](#) [GOI](#) [EXTERNAL](#) [ISRAELI](#) [PALESTINIAN](#) [AFFAIRS](#)

SUBJECT: A/S SILVERBERG AND FM LIVNI DISCUSS IRAN,
CONVERGENCE, AND UN/PALESTINIAN ISSUES

Classified By: Ambassador Richard H. Jones; Reasons: 1.4 (B and D).

1. (C) Summary: Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni told IO A/S Silverberg and the Ambassador May 14 that time is running out in the international community's efforts to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. She outlined Israel's justification for the "convergence" plan, denying that the GOI intends to act unilaterally and explaining the need for international support. Livni noted Israel's desire for greater involvement in UN institutions and asked whether the international community's resolve against Hamas could be leveraged into a less anti-Israel position within the UN. Livni cautioned against allowing internal politics in Lebanon to distract from full implementation of UNSCR 1559. The Ambassador and Assistant Secretary raised a number of Agreement on Movement and Access (AMA) and humanitarian issues, including security for President Mahmud Abbas, the customs protocol, exports from Gaza, the Security Working Group, the EU's temporary international mechanism, medical payments to the Augusta Victoria Hospital, and fuel supplies. The meeting concluded with a discussion of anti-trafficking efforts, with the Ambassador and A/S Silverberg urging additional steps prior to PM Ehud Olmert's upcoming visit to Washington. FM Livni was accompanied by Director General Ron Prosor, Deputy Director General for the UN and International Organizations Aharon "Ronny" Leshno Yaar, Chief of Staff Yaki Dayan, Director for UN Political Affairs Roni Adam, and Special Adviser Hillel Newman. End summary.

IRAN: TIME IS WORKING AGAINST US

2. (C) Livni expressed concern that time to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons is running out. In her assessment, Russia will not support UNSC sanctions. "The question," she added, "is what will the United States do?" A/S Silverberg said the EU is preparing a package of "positive and negative consequences" for Iran. The U.S. and the EU will endorse incentives if Iran abandons its nuclear ambitions, and will ask Russia and China to agree to the negative consequences if Iran persists. The more difficult debate in the UNSC will be on a second resolution that will be required to impose sanctions if Iran continues to defy the international community. She said that the USG does not have unlimited patience and will move outside the UNSC if necessary. Livni asked about the possibility of using the G-8 to pressure Iran. A/S Silverberg replied that the USG is considering all alternatives.

3. (C) Livni complained that Iran does not pay any price for President Ahmadinejad's unacceptable anti-Israel statements. She suggested that the UNSC consider a new resolution condemning Iran's bellicose position against a fellow UN member state. A/S Silverberg replied that the USG is open to such suggestions, but would need to carefully consider timing so as not to give UNSC members the opportunity to focus on this resolution in place of other tough actions on Iran. She noted that the Secretary expresses outrage at Ahmadinejad's statements whenever she discusses Iran.

CONVERGENCE PROMOTES A TWO-STATE SOLUTION

4. (C) Livni outlined the GOI's justification for the "convergence" plan, which will remove settlers from east of the separation barrier while consolidating remaining settlements west of the barrier. She maintained that the Palestinians are not fulfilling their obligations under the Roadmap; Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmud Abbas is incapable of taking necessary steps and Hamas has no interest in doing so. This situation, in her analysis, condemns any Israeli-Palestinian negotiation at present to failure and will inevitably lead to stagnation and violence. Consequently, Israel -- in conjunction with the international community -- wants to examine other options. She described the role of the international community, especially the United States, as "essential" in promoting and implementing a two-state solution. She said that PM Olmert plans to discuss the plan in general terms with the President on May 23.

5. (C) Complaining that "Israel is being misunderstood," Livni acknowledged that it is "not in Israel's interests to

take unilateral steps." She stressed that the GOI sees convergence as compatible with the Roadmap because it divides the historical "Land of Israel" into two and creates the possibility of a viable and contiguous Palestinian state, while leaving what she called the "hard core of the conflict" -- refugees and Jerusalem -- for final status talks. She expressed optimism that the USG and GOI would not differ significantly on the route of the "fence" and "borders" that would allow Palestinians and Israelis to live side-by-side in relative peace and security. She acknowledged, however, that the Palestinians will not accept anything less than negotiated final borders. The Ambassador noted that statements on unilateral moves and final borders have also raised the anxiety of some Quartet members. He suggested that the GOI emphasize elements of its plan that will ease the lives of both Israelis and Palestinians. Livni said that ending the occupation is in the interests of both sides. Israel is willing to "make a real change" and take "risky steps," but the GOI needs the support of the international community.

ISRAELI INVOLVEMENT AT THE UN AND CONCERNS ABOUT HAMAS

16. (C) Livni told A/S Silverberg that Israel wants to be involved more broadly in the UN, not just on issues related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. MFA Deputy Director-General for the UN and International Organizations Ronny Leshno Yaar noted that he had discussed this issue in depth with A/S Silverberg on May 11 (septel), especially Israel's desire for greater interaction in the Western European and Others Group (WEOG). A/S Silverberg agreed that the goal is to ensure Israeli participation in WEOG's policy discussions, not just election issues. She noted that Yaar had promised to develop a non-paper with priorities. She suggested that Israel focus on a small number of issues outside the region, mentioning human rights in Burma as an example, and noted that it will be easiest to make progress in technical organizations, citing Israeli involvement at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). A/S Silverberg said that such activities help reinforce the idea that Israel can be a constructive player on all issues.

17. (C) Livni expressed concern that UN contacts with the PA could weaken the Quartet's strong principles on Hamas. She asked whether the international community's united stand against Hamas could be leveraged to alter UN policy on issues such as the separation barrier and settlements, or at least to reduce the number of gratuitous references to Israel in unrelated resolutions and statements. A/S Silverberg said she had reiterated the USG's views on contacts with Hamas during recent meetings with UN officials in both New York and in Jerusalem. She agreed that gratuitous references to Israel continue to be a concern.

LEBANON AND SYRIA: IMPLEMENT 1559 FULLY

18. (C) Livni expressed understanding for the international community's desire to strengthen Lebanese PM Siniora, but said that this policy should not be linked to Lebanon's full implementation of UNSCR 1559. Livni compared Siniora to PA President Abbas, complaining that both want "something without doing anything." She urged the international community to save any rewards for Siniora until after he has earned them. A/S Silverberg stressed that the USG continues to call for full implementation of UNSCR 1559 and described efforts to negotiate a solution in New York. When asked about the Sheba farms/Har Dov area, Livni urged the international community to take Israeli considerations into account and not leave the border demarcation solely to Lebanon and Syria.

AMA and PA Issues

19. (C) Noting concerns about the personal security of President Abbas and the important role played by the Presidential Guard at Rafah, the Ambassador asked the GOI to provide permission for donors to supply the Presidential Guard with a limited quantity of ammunition. The Ambassador also repeated previous requests on Agreement on Movement and Access (AMA) issues, including Israeli acceptance of a customs protocol, GOI participation in the Security Working Group, and increasing opportunities for Palestinian exports through Karni. Chief of Staff Yaki Dayan interjected that the problem at Karni is related to scanning containers. The Ambassador replied that the USG has provided a scanner capable of addressing this problem and could deploy a second one to accelerate processing if need be. Livni said she would check with her Cabinet colleagues on the ammunition and AMA issues.

10. (C) The Ambassador raised the EU's work on a temporary international mechanism to ensure direct delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people. He suggested that the GOI has an opportunity to influence the EU by explaining its plans to use PA tax revenues for humanitarian purposes. Beyond payments for electricity, water, and medicine, he inquired whether the tax revenues could be utilized for fuel purchases, e.g., some sort of humanitarian fuel reserve under NGO oversight. Livni noted that Abbas had so far not used assets from the Palestinian Investment Fund to finance fuel or salaries and has been ambiguous when addressing the issue with donors. Saying "maybe he (Abbas) knows better," Livni suggested that an alternate funding mechanism might work against the interests of Abbas. In response to a comment by the Ambassador, MFA Director General Ron Prosor said the GOI is close to resolving the issue of funding for Palestinian patients at the Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem.

Anti-trafficking Efforts

11. (C) In preparation for PM Olmert's upcoming visit to Washington, the Ambassador mentioned the President's strong interest in world-wide anti-trafficking efforts. He urged the GOI to maintain momentum against trafficking in persons, suggesting that the GOI consider further action on a draft bill to criminalize labor trafficking. The Assistant Secretary reinforced these points. Livni said that she had

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discussed anti-trafficking efforts with PM Olmert earlier that morning. Saying that the United States is "pushing on an open door," she added that the GOI intends to issue a statement on the issue prior to Olmert's trip. She also welcomed the Ambassador's expressed intention to broach the draft bill with Justice Minister Haim Ramon, who is responsible for managing the GOI's legislative agenda. Livni and Prosor both noted that she had discussed anti-trafficking difficulties along the Egyptian border during her last visit to Washington.

12. (U) This cable was cleared by A/S Silverberg.

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JONES